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CORRESPONDENCE.

A LANGUAGE OF THE PHILIPPINES.

To the Editors of *Mod. Lang. Notes*.

SIRS :—On January 26, 1907, Dr. Charles Wilhelm Seidenadel of Chicago presented to the Philological Society of the University of Chicago selected chapters of his manuscript *First Grammar of The Bontoc Igorot*. The author, who is a trained philologist and a thorough musician, associated last summer for several months with the members of a group of the Igorot tribe, about thirty in number, brought to Chicago at the close of the St. Louis Exposition and exhibited at River View Park. Continuous intercourse with these people, often lasting ten hours each day, enabled Mr. Seidenadel not only to understand their language, but also to converse with them freely in it upon a basis of mutual intelligibility. He was successful in transcribing between three and four thousand complete sentences, which he first repeatedly tested in actual use and then subjected to critical examination and classification for the purpose of the Grammar.

The linguistic and ethnological importance of a study like that here mentioned is clear in the light of our close national relations with the Philippine Islands and of the almost utter lack of trustworthy philological work in the languages of the archipelago. Mr. Seidenadel's remarkable initial success, his singular natural gift and special training for making accurate phonetic transcriptions of the spoken word, and his personal friendly relations with a considerable group of the natives prominent in the Igorot tribe, are, it seems to the members of the Philological Society, strong reasons for expecting from Mr. Seidenadel's further research in this direction results of very great importance for the linguistic and ethnological history of the Islands.

Mr. Seidenadel hopes to secure from some source the means needed for residence in the Philippines to complete his studies of the Bontoc Igorot and to extend his attention to other allied dialects.

STARR WILLARD CUTTING,
Secretary of the Philological Society.

The University of Chicago.

THE ETYMOLOGY OF *bore*.

To the Editors of *Mod. Lang. Notes*.

SIRS :—The *Oxford Dictionary* rejects the usual explanation of the verb *bore*, 'to weary,' as a figurative use of *bore*, 'to pierce,' holding that

the noun *bore* in the sense of 'the malady of ennui' (1766) is the source of the other senses, and of the verb itself. An interesting passage from a letter of Lady Sarah Lennox, January 9, 1766 (*Life and Letters*, 1902, I, 179), is worth adding to the quotations given by Dr. Murray, and may perhaps be thought to supply evidence for the priority of the noun :

"I have given you a pretty good boar upon dress . . . I told you the word 'boar' is a fashionable expression for tiresome people & conversations, & is a very good one & very useful, for one may tell anybody (Ld G. Cavendish for example), 'I am sure this will be a boar, so I must leave you, Ld George.' If it was not the fashion it would be very rude, but I own I encourage the fashion vastly, for it's delightful I think ; one need only name a pig or pork, & nobody dares take it ill but hold their tongues directly."

Yet after all it seems more probable that the current etymology is correct. The verb in the sense of 'to weary by tedious conversation' is quoted from 1768, and may well have been in use a few years earlier. *To bore one's ears* in the sense of 'to force one to listen' is duly registered by Dr. Murray, with three quotations, the latest from 1642, and he adds a cross-reference to the verb *bore* 'to weary.' The following additional quotations (especially the second) conduct one easily enough to the latter verb, for it is not difficult to pass from 'to bore a person's ears with offensive or tedious conversation' to the simpler 'to bore a person.' Such ellipses are common enough.

1665. *The English Rogue* (I, 242 of the reprint): "His prophane and irreligious discourse did so bore my glowing ears, that . . . I could not endure to hear him blaspheme."

1699. *The Country Gentleman's Vade Mecum*, p. 4 : "If you'll come here you must sometimes expect to be encountered with the Apes and Peacocks of the Town, those useless Creatures that we dignifie and distinguish by the modish Titles of *Fops* and *Beaux*, and what's worse, be compelled to suffer your Ears to be bor'd through and grated with an empty, tedious Din of their dull Impertinencies, or else the squeamish Cox[c]ombs look awry and scornfully upon you, and immediately repute you to be a *proud, ill-natur'd, unmannerly Country Fellow*."

There is surely no difficulty in getting from the verb *bore* in the figurative sense of 'to weary' to the noun *bore* 'ennui.' As for the adjective *French* in *French bore* (1768),—which Dr. Murray says "naturally suggests that the word is of French origin" and which leads him to hazard the conjecture *bourre*, 'padding,' 'triviality,'—